

Message Text

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FM AMEMBASSY BELGRADE

TO USIA WASHDC PRIORITY

INFO SECSTATE WASHDC 7218

UNCLAS BELGRADE 4395

USIAC

FOR IEU

E.O. 11652: N/A

SUBJECT: INDEPENDENCE DAY CELEBRATIONS IN BELGRADE

1. A FINE TURNOUT OF GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS, DIPLOMATS, MEDIA REPRESENTATIVES, CULTURAL LEADERS AND PARTY FUNCTIONARIES ATTENDED AMBASSADORIAL RECEPTION JULY 1 IN BELGRADE WHERE HIGHLIGHT WAS EXHIBIT "LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPINESS".

2. USIS WAS LARGELY RESPONSIBLE FOR DESIGN AND INSTALLATION OF EXHIBIT AND OTHER 4TH OF JULY DECORATIONS ON THE RESIDENCE GROUNDS. RECEPTION WAS HELD ON JULY 1 TO AVOID CONFLICT WITH YUGOSLAV HOLIDAY JULY 4.

3. ARRIVING VISITORS SAW TWO AMERICAN BICENTENNIAL FLAGS MARKING ENTRANCE TO RESIDENCE. LINING THE WALKWAY WERE EIGHT VELVET BANNERS FROM "LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS" EXHIBIT BEARING HISTORICAL INSCRIPTIONS TAKEN FROM THE WRITINGS OF THE FOUNDERS OF THE REPUBLIC. RESIDENCE ITSELF WAS BACKDROP FOR RECEIVING LINE; A LARGE AMERICAN FLAG HUNG DOWN THE FRONT OF THE RESIDENCE, SET OFF BY 50 SMALLER STATE FLAGS LINING THE PARAPET.

4. THE RESIDENCE'S GROUNDS HELD LARGE BLOW-UPS OF THE CONSTITUTION, BILL OF RIGHTS AND DECLARATION OF INDEPENDENCE

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PROVIDED BY RPO VIENNA. THREE SPECIALLY CONSTRUCTED KIOSKS

FEATURED A NOSTALGIC COLLECTION OF AMERICAN POSTER ART. A LOCALLY PRODUCED EXHIBIT DISPLAYED ON THE LAWNS DEPICTED THE CONTRIBUTIONS AND ACHIEVEMENTS OF AMERICANS OF YUGOSLAV DESCENT TO OUR NATIONS'S HISTORY.

5. WHILE A SEVEN-MEMBER U.S. AIR FORCE BAND PLAYED PATRIOTIC AND MODERN SONGS, GUESTS WERE LED THROUGH A RECEIVING LINE AND THEN OUT TO THE LAWNS WHERE THE MAIN PART OF "LIFE, LIBERTY AND THE PURSUIT OF HAPPINESS" WAS ON DISPLAY. THIS EXHIBIT WITH BOTH ENGLISH AND SERBO-CROATION CAPTIONS WAS SUBJECT OF MANY COMPLIMENTS TO AMBASSADOR AND HIS STAFF BY GUESTS. ATTENDANCE AT RECEPTION WAS LARGEST WITHIN MEMORY AT THIS POST AND ALL STRATA OF YUGOSLAV SOCIETY WERE WELL REPRESENTED.

6. SAME EVENING BELGRADE TV RAN FORTY FIVE MINUTE SPECIAL ON AMERICA ENTITLED "200 YEARS." DOCUMENTARY EDITOR BLAGOJE LAZIC SELECTED FOOTAGE FROM EIGHT USIS FILMS PLUS STILLS FROM USIS MORGUE. BACKDROP WAS COLONIAL MAP SUPPLIED BY USIS. GENERALLY POSITIVE TREATMENT OF U.S. EMRGED AS SHOW BEGAN WITH VOICE REPORT FROM NEW YORK BY POLITIKA CORRESPONDENT JURIJ GUSTINCIC ON THE MOOD OF AMERICA. LAZIC AND ANOTHER VOICE THEN ALTERNATED THROUGH A RECOUNTING OF AMERICAN HISTORY. THEY FOCUSED HEAVILY ON WARS, BUT NOT TOTALLY NEGATIVELY. LAZIC NOTED THAT LENIN CALLED THE AMERICAN REVOLUTIONARY WAR "A GREAT WAR, A TRUE REVOLUTIONARY LIBERATION WAR." THEY THEN TURNED TO OTHER ACHIEVEMENTS IN THE U.S.: BLUE JEANS, COMPUTERS, SPACE SHOTS, COCA COLA AND SO FORTH.

7. LAZIC ENDED WITH A COMMENT ON U.S. YUGOSLAV RELATIONS: "THESE ARE GOOD RELATIONS, ABSOLUTELY EQUAL ONES, AND THEY ARE CONSTANTLY IMPROVING IN VARIOUS FIELDS. BUT, SOMETHING SPECIAL, SOMETHING EXTREMELY IMPORTANT, SHOULD BE STRESSED IN MY OPINION: ALTHOUGH OUR SOCIAL SYSTEMS-- IN YUGOSLAVIA AND IN AMERICA-- DIFFER VERY MUCH, ALTHOUGH OUR AND THEIR VIEWS ON SOME THINGS IN THIS WORLD ARE DIFFERENT AND OFTEN DO NOT AGREE, WE HAVE SUCCEEDED IN BUILDING BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND THE USA--THE SORT OF MUTUAL RELATIONS IN WHICH A QUIET, CONSTANT, WORKING, POSITIVE DEALOGUE IS INCORPORATED, A DIALOGUE ABOUT EVERYTHING, AND THEREFORE ALSO ABOUT THE MOST NOTABLE DIFFERENCES IN OUR VIEWS. AND WITH THE WORLD SUCH AS IT IS TODAY, THIS IS NOT A

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SMALL THING, NOR IS IT A COMMON OCCURRENCE."
CATHERMAN

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